Empowering Social Skills and Social Inclusion,
Sarah Mai OTR/L - Attendees will learn how to better facilitate social inclusion within family gatherings, community activities, birthday parties, and play dates with peers. You will learn how to facilitate positive social behaviors and create situations where your preschool or elementary age child with Down syndrome can be socially successful. Social learning is critical and it needs to occur every day, in every context, and at every stage of development. Let's come together and learn how to be purposeful with how we teach and shape these skills.

**Audience participation notes attached.**

**Further questions?**

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Planning Ahead to Increase the Likelihood of a Socially Successful Outing in the Community

**PERSON STRATEGIES:**
- What can you do directly to and for your child to prepare him/her for this outing?
- How do you communicate what is going to happen and what your expectations are?
- Is there a specific job or purpose you can assign your child to give them a focus during this outing?
- What are other factors influencing your child’s behavior and what can you do about them? (hunger, sleep, sensory needs)
- What are his/her triggers and what is the game plan for avoiding or navigating them?
- What is the plan for reinforcement if your child does well socially?
- What are the planned consequences if your child demonstrates negative behaviors?

**TASK STRATEGIES:**
- How can you modify the outing to be a better fit for your child?
- Are there ways you can reduce the stressors or the demands on your child?
- What additional activities or distractors can you provide that will increase the likelihood of positive social behaviors in that situation?
- What visual, communication, or behavior supports can you have present during the outing to facilitate appropriate behaviors?
- Is your child able to physically participate in the activities at this outing and if so, will your child be physically fatigued after the activity?

**ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGIES:**
- What is the best timing for going on this outing and how long is it going to last?
- Consider the sensory stimulation of the environment, and plan accordingly.
- Will the environment require times of waiting and how do you plan for that?
- How can you prepare the adults and children you will be with to support your child’s needs and your parenting strategies?
- Are there alternatives for the physical location or seating within the location that are a better fit for your child?
- Are there areas within this environment where it is appropriate for your child to be active and move around?
- Is there anything about this environment that would make your child scared or anxious?
- How can you take care of yourself as the caregiver to ensure you are calm to handle stressors?
Planning Ahead to Increase the Likelihood of a Socially Successful Outing in the Community

3. Outing or Location: **Dinner out at a restaurant**

![Diagram of Person, Task, Environment]

**PERSON STRATEGIES:**
Prepare the child
Berenstein Bears books that deal w/ various situations
First/then is hard over extended time

**TASK STRATEGIES:**
iPad
Crayons & coloring page or books
Bag of things to do
Sensory items to bite on

**ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGIES:**
Clear the space
Avoid restaurants that are over stimulating
Planning Ahead to Increase the Likelihood of a Socially Successful Outing in the Community

1. Outing or Location: **Holiday Family Gathering**

![Diagram of Person, Task, Environment]

**PERSON STRATEGIES:**
- When, who, what
- What time
- Review
- Social Stories

**TASK STRATEGIES:**
- Bring predictable, motivating things
- Adjust my expectations
- Keep cool under pressure

**ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGIES:**
- Make sure they have a spot to escape
- Adjust the length
- Food that they're used to
Planning Ahead to Increase the Likelihood of a Socially Successful Outing in the Community

4. Outing or Location: Out-of-Town Vacation

PERSON STRATEGIES:
- Notify ppl who need to know of your special needs
- Know of/treat ahead of time for sickness, toilet thing, video chat ahead time w/ ppl you will see

TASK STRATEGIES:
- Limit excessive use of stimulating apps
- Prioritize
- Plan route for breaks & playland, etc.
- Plan timeframe of travel for kids needs

ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGIES:
- Videos of airplane/airport
- Location of seat
- Take comfort items that are used to
Planning Ahead to Increase the Likelihood of a Socially Successful Outing in the Community

6. Outing or Location: Play date with multiple children

PERSON STRATEGIES:
- Identify people who are going to be there
- Prepare for personalities or other kids
- Look for adult influence
- Bring familiar items

TASK STRATEGIES:
- First/then - good behavior / consequences
- Calm down strategies for other person

ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGIES:
- Drop off if age appropriate
- Trail run if a new place
- Accessible for medical equipment
- Paws or allergies need to be avoided
- Take sensory items: Figets

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Planning Ahead to Increase the Likelihood of a Socially Successful Outing in the Community

8. Outing or Location: A public sports event

PERSON STRATEGIES:

Aunt in advance
Visit

TASK STRATEGIES:

Get them used to it
Hone self

ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGIES:

Call us ahead
Special Seating
Public Sports Event

Person
1. Always be where X can see you.
2. Hold hands
3. Sit through 3 innings, then play area.
4. YouTube video of what to expect

Task
1. Going to play area.
2. Electronics
3. Bag of toys/snacks

Environment
1. Ear phones
2. Exit Strategy
3.
4.
Planning Ahead to Increase the Likelihood of a Socially Successful Outing in the Community

2. Outing or Location: A Child Birthday Party

PERSON STRATEGIES:
- Preparing him/her with social stories, what to expect and not to expect, visual schedule for party.
- Make sure child has adequate sleep, proper feeding before your child that may come up.
- Talk to parent to find out possible triggers for your child.
- Give time to process - help child through stressful situation.

TASK STRATEGIES:
- Have a plan for exit in case of distress.
- Bring comfort objects.
- Limit time at party.
- Visual schedule.
- Remind child of coping skills (breathe, close eyes, give self hug, etc).

ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGIES:
- Knowing where party is, how many people will be there.
- Sit in area where child is comfortable.
- Prepare hosts and make them aware of your child's needs, triggers.